Strategic curriculum change: staff and student identities and roles

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The King’s-Warwick Project
Major changes

UK - £9000 fees; strengthened market
Hong Kong – move to 4-year degrees
US – tuition fee increases
Europe – Bologna restructuring
Changes in curricula 1

**Traditional**
- Knowing that
- Written communication
- Personal
- Internal
- Disciplinary skills
- Intellectual orientation
- Problem-making
- Knowledge as process
- Understanding
- Concept-based
- Knowledge-based
- Pure

**Emerging**
- Knowing how
- Oral communication
- Interpersonal
- External
- Transferable skills
- Action orientation
- Problem-solving
- Knowledge as product
- Information
- Issue-based
- Task-based
- Applied

Barnett
Changes in curricula 2

From “is it true?” to “what use is it?”

“…doing rather than knowing, and performance rather than understanding … there is a mistrust of all things that cannot easily be quantified or measured”

Barnett
From Tapper T., and Palfreyman D., (2004), OXCHEPS Occasional Paper no. 14

The Continuum of HE Systems – Convergence in the Bermuda Triangle or in the Azores?

- **ANGLOSPHERE** (including USA)
  - Australia
  - UK
- New EU Countries
  - NZ
  - Canada
  - Latin America
  - Austria
- Africa, Russia, Eastern Europe, France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Holland, Nordics...

- mixed-economy public/private with high fees;
- ruthless hierarchy/stratification and immense diversity among HEIs, including a top tier commanding global prestige/branding
- sizeable ‘for-profit’ sector

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* Increasing tuition fees
  - Consumer-resistance to ever-increasing tuition fees in private HEIs;
  - plus increasing political interference/accountability/performance-funding for public HEIs.
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- ‘nationalised industry state/public HE systems with low/no fees;
- homogeneous mediocrity amongst HEIs opting out of the race for global status/branding

(C) David Palfreyman, 2004
http://oxcheps.new.ac.uk
Curriculum tensions 1

Student-centredness
- choice
- flexibility
- student as customer

Employability
- skills development
- focus on outcomes – graduate attributes
Curriculum tensions 2

Similarity

- league table comparisons

Difference

- institutional distinctiveness
  - Melbourne model
  - Durham difference
  - King’s experience
Curriculum choices

- Discipline-based curriculum
- Intrinsic/Extrinsic
- Depth
- Content
- Cohering round discipline
## Curriculum choices

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Curriculum questions

• What trends do you see in curricula in your institution? How would you characterise them?
• What issues and tensions for staff and students?
• What implications for academic development?
Intersecting economies

- Monetary economy
- Academic structures
- Learning

Academic habitus

- Academic capitalism
- Academic community
- Prestige economy